

Remarks

The Office Action mailed December 17, 2003 has been received and fully considered. Claims 27, 29, 35, 37, and 39 have been amended. Support for the claim amendments is found in the specification as originally filed, for example, at page 8, line 21 through page 9, line 10, and Fig. 3. No new matter has been added.

Claim 39 is objected to for reciting "PEBA". The claim has been amended to recite the full name. Support for the amendment is found in the specification as originally filed, for example on page 5, line 8.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b)

Claims 27-29, 35 and 36 are rejected as being anticipated by Wendell et al. (US 5,147,336). The claims, as amended, recite a hub having a helical strain relief portion in which spaces between bends in the helical wall extend into a passage for receiving a catheter tube. Wendell et al. disclose a hub 52 with a lower distal portion 110 having a helical groove 114 in its outer surface. The grooved portion surrounds a sheath 54 for receiving a catheter tube. See column 5, lines 57-68, and FIG. 13 of Wendell et al. Wendell et al. specifically teach the helical groove being in just the outer surface of the distal part that covers a sheath. There are no spaces in the distal portion of the hub of Wendell et al. that extend into the passage for the catheter. Wendell et al. fail to teach each and every limitation of the claims and thus cannot be considered to anticipate the claims. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 37-39 are rejected as being unpatentable over Wendell et al. in view of Prichard et al. (US 5,380,301). As stated above, Wendell et al. fail to teach the basic features of the invention as now claimed. Prichard et al. do not supply what Wendell et al. lack. Prichard et al. teach a separate solid strain relief portion made of a material that is more flexible than that used for the hub. See column 4, lines 37-47. Thus, even if the disclosures of Wendell et al. and Prichard et al. were combined, one would not achieve the instantly claimed invention. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

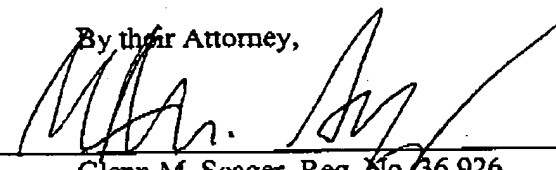
Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. Any inquiry regarding this matter may be directed to the undersigned representative at (612) 677-9050.

Respectfully submitted,

HOLMAN ET AL.

By their Attorney,

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